DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 201 384 PS 012 121

TITLE	A Comprehensive Study and Evaluation of Three Types of Kindergarten Programs. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Wisconsin State Dept. of Public Instruction, Madison.
SPONS AGENCY	Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.
BUREAU NO	80-49-0126-C
PUB DATE	80
NOTE	32p.
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrator Attitudes; *Kindergarten; *Parent Attitudes; Primary Education; *Program Evaluation; Program Length; Questionnaires; School Schedules; School Visitation; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	Wisconsin

ABSTRACT

Results from a study conducted by the project staff of the Amherst Elementary School in Amherst, Wisconsin, during the fall of 1980 to determine which of three types of kindergarten programs would be most advantageous to the School District of the Tomorrow River are reported. The programs investigated were full-day daily, full-day alternate day, and half-day daily. Teacher and principal questionnaires were sent to selected schools in Wisconsin and to a few school districts selected randomly from throughout the United States. Questionnaires were also mailed to parents who would have children in kindergarten during one or more of the next three school years. A total of 150 teacher questionnaires, 75 principal questionnaires, and 158 parent questionnaires were sent. Additional information on the three programs was gathered during on-site visits to five school districts in Wisconsin, Ohio, and Minnesota. Based on the on-site visits and the survey data it was concluded that the full-day program is advantageous in a number of ways. It offers more instructional time for students, more time for implementing special subjects (such as art, music, and physical education) in the curriculum, and prepares children for first grade better than the other programs. It also eliminates the problem and cost of mid-day busing and allows children to be involved in all-school functions such as special assemblies, lunch programs, etc. Nearly 100% of the parents, teachers, and principals involved with a full-day program favored it. Advantages and disadvantages of each of the programs are briefly noted. (Author/MP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED201384

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Final Report

A Comprehensive Study and Evaluation of Three Types of Kindergarten Programs

Project #80-49-0126-C

School District of the Tomorrow River
Amherst, Wisconsin

District Administrator:

Robert E. Barrett

Project Staff:

Beverly Pede
Patricia Peters
W.A. Gilles

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Wisconsin State Dept. of Public Instruction
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PS012121

Final Report

A study was conducted by the project staff of the Amherst Elementary School during the fall of 1980 to determine which type of kindergarten program; full-day daily, full-day alternate day, or half-day daily would be most advantageous to the School District of the Tomorrow River. The study was fully funded by ESEA - Title IV-C under the supervision of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

The project activities began after the close of the 1979-80 school year with project staff meetings on June 14-15.

Three project staff members went to summer institutes during July.

A request was placed in the NAESP Communicator for information from schools that had full-day daily or full-day alternate day kindergarten. There was good response to the request with more than 30 schools responding. These schools were later involved in completion of questionnaires developed by the staff.

School visitations were made to the five school districts:

September 26 - A rural school district in Central Wisconsin.
Full-day daily kindergarten for all students.

October 15-18 - A large metropolitan school district in Ohio.
Full-day daily kindergarten for selected students.

October 23-24 - Three small, rural school districts in Minnesota.
Full-day alternate day kindergarten for all students.

Teacher and principal questionnaires were sent to those schools responding to the NAESP Communicator request, to selected Wisconsin schools, and to a few school districts selected randomly from throughout the nation. A total of 75 principal questionnaires and 150 teacher questionnaires were sent. Responses were subsequently tabulated and information used to develop conclusions and recommendations.

In November the staff developed reports for the school board and on-site visits. On November 24, 1980, the project staff presented a report of its project activites to the district school board. It was recommended that the school board continue its current program type for the 1981-82 school year.

An on-site evaluation by evaluators from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction was conducted on December 8, 1980. Anticipated future activities include dissemination of project findings to those persons requesting information during the study and to state and national educational groups.

The project staff will not formulate a subsequent Title IV-C adapter/adopter proposal.

Questionnaires, results of surveys, visitation reports, and project conclusions and recommendations follow.

Amherst Elementary School
Amherst, Wisconsin

Title IV-C Project # 90-07-0126-C

Pre-school Parent Survey

Name _____(optional)

1. Does your child live in a single parent home? _____Yes _____No

2. Due to parent work schedules are baby sitters required for your family? ___Yes ___No

3. Will busing be required when your child attends school? _____Yes _____No

Kindergarten Program Types:

Half-day daily (8:30 A.M. - 11:45 A.M. or 11:45 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.)

Full-day daily (8:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. every day)

Full-day alternate days (8:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. on a rotating schedule)

I. Have you had a child that attended kindergarten in prior years? ___Yes ___No
If yes, please answer the following:

1. What type of program was it?
_____Half-day daily
_____Full-day daily
_____Full-day—alternate days

2. City and state where program was located? _____
_____

3. Were you satisfied with the program? ____Yes ____No
Comments: _____
_____
_____

II. If you had a choice of kindergarten programs for your child to attend, which of the following would you choose?
_____Half-day daily
_____Full-day daily
_____Full-day—alternate days

Comments: _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Pre-School Parent Survey

Surveys were sent to parents that would have children in kindergarten during one or more of the next three school years. 158 surveys were sent and 123 or 77.8% returned.

Responses were as follows:

I. Choice of programs:

73.2% favored half-day daily kindergarten

8.1% favored full-day daily kindergarten

18.7% favored full-day alternate day kindergarten

II. Baby-sitters Required:

39.9% Half-day daily

60 % Full-day daily

52.2% Full-day alternate days

III. Busing Required:

86.7% Half-day daily

100% Full-day daily

91.3% Full-day alternate days

Selected Parent Comments:

"I often feel that we all sometimes forget that children are children, myself included, and we push them too hard, too fast, too soon. I'm worried that a full-day kindergarten would do just that."

"Full-day daily is too long for a 5 year old."

" ½ day promises a more "positive" attitude of school."

"Attention span and ability to behave and socialize would be severely tested in a full day of school."

(Selected Parent Comments cont.)

" A full-day alternate day would be confusing to parents and kids."

"Full-day/alternate days would lack continuity and not give the children enough structure."

"Totally against full days - for a whole year."

"If money is the consideration cut it from the athletic program."

"They learn as many things at home as they do in school at this age."

"Not emotionally ready to be away from home for full days on a regular basis."

"There is no preschool in the Amherst area. Most are rural; children have little social inter-action with his peers. Full-day daily kindergarten would provide social development, readiness activities, physical and emotional, and intellectual development."

"Not enough time in a ½ day program. This schedule (full-day alternate days) allows for proper teaching time, less hustle and bustle. Less chasing."

Conclusions:

1.) The majority of parents in this school district prefer half-day daily kindergarten. Their comments indicate that this program best correlates with the maturational level of their children.

2.) The second choice of parents would be the full-day alternate days program. This choice seems to be greatly influenced by the need for baby sitters and busing rather than its educational value and meeting the needs of the students.

Amherst Elementary School
Amherst, Wisconsin

Kindergarten Questionnaire - Teacher

Title IV-C Project #80-07-0126-C

Name _____ School District _____

Highest Degree _____ Number of years teaching experience ____

I. Programs

A. Type:

_____Half-day daily

_____Full-day daily

_____Full-day, alternate days

_____Other. Explain _____

_____

B. Amount of time children spend in school:

a. First semester
_____Hours per day

____Days per week

b. Second semester
_____Hours per day

_____Days per week

C. Number of children in class:

Group 1 _____ Group 2 _____

D. Teacher's philosophy of Kindergarten Education is to emphasize: (Choose one)

_____Socializing experience

_____Readiness experience

E. Possible advantages and disadvantages of the three types of programs are listed below. Check those that apply to your program.

1. _____Adequate time to meet the needs of the planned curriculum.

_____In-adequate time to meet the needs of the planned curriculum.

2. _____Busing does not pose problems.

_____Transportation system requires a lengthy mid-day bus trip.

3. _____Transportation does not interfere with planned kindergarten curriculum.

_____Afternoon kindergarten sessions are often shortened by late bus arrival.

4. _____Children have opportunities to participate with older children within the nucleus of the school setting.

_____Children frequently miss assemblies and other all-school experiences.

5. _____Children have opportunities for a structured rest period.

_____A nap time is required and difficult to manage.

6. _____Children can rest on their free days.

_____Children are frequently tired at the end of the session.

_____Rest time is not a concern of this program.

7. _____Lunchroom routines provide for the learning that comes from a balanced nutritional program.

_____Difficulties are experienced in lunchroom routines and eating in a school setting.

8. _____Children can have extended work periods.

_____Enough time is not available for adequate work periods.

9. _____Children develop good social skills.

_____There is a lack of continuity in peer relationships.

10. _____Program provides good academic continuity on a day to day basis.

_____Children have difficulty remembering lessons taught on previous school days.

11. _____Teacher preparation and relief time is adequate.

_____Teacher preparation and relief time is inadequate.

12. _____First grade teachers report that children are well-prepared academically.

_____First grade teachers report that children are not prepared for the first grade curriculum.

13. _____First grade teachers report that children are prepared to cope with a full-day program.

_____First grade teachers report that children have difficulty attending school all day.

II. Program Description

A. For the type of activities included in your program, supply the number of times each activity meets per week and the number of minutes in each session.

	Times/week	Minutes/session
1. Sharing time		
2. Music		
3. Story hour		
4. Language Development		
5. Art		
6. Reading Readiness		
7. Math Readiness		
8. Social Studies		
9. Science		
10. Rest Period		
11. Snack		
12. Lunch		
13. Physical Education		
14. Library skills class		

B. Of the activities listed above, name those taught by a certified teacher other than yourself. _____

_____

_____

C. How are paraprofessionals used in the program? _____

_____

_____

D. What initial preparation is provided for paraprofessionals? _____

_____

_____

E. To what extent does your program have parental involvement? _____

_____

_____

F. Please list commercially prepared readiness materials used and rate their value to your program.

Reading

1. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
2. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
3. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor

Math

1. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
2. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
3. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor

Language

1. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
2. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
3. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor

Other

1. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
2. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor
3. _____ ___Excellent ___Average ___Poor

III. Program Evaluation

A. What do you feel are the major advantages of your type of program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. What do you feel are the disadvantages of your type of program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. What trends do you see occuring in regard to kindergarten programs in your state?

_____

_____

_____

D. If you had the choice, which one of the three types of kindergarten programs would you choose and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Kindergarten Questionnaire - Teacher

Questionnaires were sent to 150 kindergarten teachers in Wisconsin and other parts of the nation. Of these questionnaires 60 or 40% were returned.

Respondents programs were as follows:

25% (15) Half-day daily

36.7% (22) Full-day daily

38.3% (23) Full-day alternate days

The majority of teachers of all types of programs surveyed felt that emphasis was on readiness rather than socializing experiences.

Of the teacher respondents for half-day daily programs 73% preferred that program, 12% would elect a full-day alternate day if given a choice, 7% full-day daily and 8% did not respond to the question.

Of teacher respondents for full-day daily programs, 50% preferred that program, 0% would elect a full-day alternate day program if given a choice, 9% a half-day daily program, and 28% did not respond to the question. 9% said they wanted to have students eased into the full-day daily program by beginning with half days during the first quarter or semester. 4% preferred an optional all day program.

Of teacher respondents for full-day alternate programs 30% preferred that program, 16% would elect a full-day daily program if given a choice (the majority of these would begin with a half-day daily program), 34% a half-day daily program and 20% did not respond to question.

13 possible advantages and disadvantages were included in the teacher survey. 3 of them have been selected for comparison.

HD/D	FD/D	FD/AD		
53%	100%	91%	1.	Adequate time to meet planned curriculum.
47%		8%		Inadequate time to meet planned curriculum.
99%	100%	30%	10.	Program provides good academic continuity on a day to day basis.
1%		52% (18% no answer)		Children have difficulty remembering lessons taught on previous school days.
73%	90%	100%	13.	First grade teachers report that children are prepared to cope with a full day program.
27%	(10% no answer)			Not prepared to cope.

Numerous advantages and disadvantages and trends were cited by each of the teachers surveyed. These, while not directly comparable, are compiled here:

Half-day Daily Programs

Advantages:

46% Daily continuity for development of lesson.
13% Students are not tired.
26% Ready for first grade.
33% No pressure, relaxed, on part of the students.
13% Aides are a help.
26% Flexible and well balanced programs.

Disadvantages:

33% Not enough time for full curriculum.
33% Not enough time for teacher preparation.
6% Bus scheduling difficulties.
13% Students seeing special teachers missing other curriculum.
33% No disadvantages.

Trends:

41% Demand for more first grade academic readiness.
13% "Deaf ear" to the childness of the five year old.
6% More state control, less local control.
6% Mandatory Kindergarten
6% "Varied" Kindergarten programs and curriculum.
6% Full day/alternate day program.

Full-day Daily Program

Advantages:

9% Well prepared for first grade.
9% Relaxed
4% Do not tire.
4% Get used to luncheon routine.
4% Field trips, more activities.
4% Developing social skills.
4% Less busing expense.
36% More covered, continuity.

Disadvantages:

4% Dismissal time, too late.
27% Children tire easily at beginning of year.
4% Difficult adjustment for immature pupil.
4% We are a babysitting program.
9% Lack of parental support.
4% Too many students.

Trends:

22% Full-day, daily.
4% Replace day care.
4% Declining enrollment.
4% All day kindergarten because of economics.
4% Four year kindergarten
4% Full-day/alternate day

Full-day Alternate Day Program

Advantages:

30% More activities (field trips, cooking, music, phy ed.)
39% More readiness.
8% Teacher tires along with the students, same speed.
26% Saves economically.
13% No bus scheduling problems.
16% Parents and children all like it.
34% Preparation for full day in first grade.

Disadvantages:

16% No disadvantages.
26% Lapse of time for immature, shy student. Is a difficult adjustment.
47% Tired children.
21% Has too long of a span until next session.
4% Bus scheduling difficult.
30% Children forget concepts.
4% Must change student activities too frequently to keep them from getting bored.

Trends:

47% All day kindergarten.
21% All day/alternate days
4% half day daily.

Conclusions:

1.) Full-day daily programs provide more time to meet the needs of a planned curriculum, provide better academic continuity, and better prepare students to cope with a first grade program.

2.) The majority of teachers of half-day daily programs and full-day daily programs preferred the program they were working in. If they were given an option to change most of them would not choose an alternate day program. The majority of teachers working with alternate day programs also would not choose this program if given the option. From this we would conclude that teachers find the alternate day program the least desirable.

3.) Each program studied has both advantages and disadvantages, however, the full-day daily and the half-day daily programs had advantages that far outweigh those of the alternate day program. The teachers also have cited far more disadvantages for the alternate day programs.

Amherst Elementary School
Amherst, Wisconsin

Kindergarten Questionnaire - Principal

Title IV-C Project # 80-07-0126-C

Name _____ School District _____

I. School Description
A. District student population _____ School enrollment _____

B. _____Rural _____Suburban _____Urban

C. Adult population is mainly employed in:

_____Agriculture _____Manufacturing _____Service

_____Other Specify: _____

D. Economic status of school population:

_____Upper class Upper-middle class _____Middle class

_____Lower-middle class _____Lower class

II. Program:
A. Type:

_____Half-day daily

_____Full-day daily

_____Full-day, alternate days

B. Number of years' experience with this program:

___1-3 ___4-6 ___7-10 ___more

C. What reason can you give for your district adopting this type of program?

_____

_____

_____

D. District philosophy of kindergarten education is to emphasize: (Choose one)

_____Socializing experiences

_____Readiness experience

III. Transportation

A. Are your kindergarten students bused? _____Yes _____No

If "Yes" please answer the following:

1. Are buses district owned? _____Yes _____No
2. What percentage of the students are bused? _____

B. Does kindergarten busing pose problems? _____Yes _____No

Comments: _____

_____

_____

IV. Food Service

A. Does your school have a breakfast program for kindergarten children?

_____Yes _____No

Comments: _____

_____

_____

B. Does your school have a lunch program for kindergarten children?

_____Yes _____No

Comments: _____

_____

_____

C. If your school has a food service program how is student supervision provided? _____

_____

_____

V. Miscellaneous

A. Does your school have a pre-school program? _____Yes _____No

B. Kindergarten children must be 5 years old on or before October 1 in our district. What is the requirement in your district? _____

C. What evaluation devices do you use for screening kindergarten entrants?

_____

_____

_____

D. Do you pre and post test kindergarten students? ____Yes ____No

If yes, what tests do you use? _____

_____

_____

VI. Program Evaluation

A. What do you feel are the major advantages of your type of program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. What do you feel are the disadvantages of your type of program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. What is the overall parental reaction to your kindergarten program?

____Positive

____Negative

Comments: _____

_____

_____

D. What is the teacher reaction to your kindergarten program?

____Positive

____Negative

Comments: _____

_____

_____

E. What trends do you see occuring in regard to kindergarten programs in your state?

F. If you had the choice, which one of the three types of kindergarten programs would you choose and why?

Kindergarten Questionnaire - Principal

Questionnaires were sent to 75 elementary school principals in Wisconsin and other parts of the nation. Of these questionnaires 54 or 72% were returned.

Respondents' programs were as follows:

16%	(12)	Half-day daily
22.7%	(17)	Full-day daily
33.3%	(25)	Full-day alternate days

The majority of responding principals from all three types of programs indicated their philosophy of kindergarten was to emphasize readiness experiences.

Of the principal respondents for half-day daily programs 83.3% preferred that program, 8.3% would elect a full-day daily program, and 8.3% did not respond to the question.

Principal respondents for full-day daily programs largely favored the program they had. 94.1% favored the full-day daily program (½ of these would give an option of half-day daily to those not ready), 5.9% would choose the half-day daily program, and 0% would choose the full-day alternate day program.

Respondents with full-day alternate day programs were the least favorable about their program. 32% preferred this program, 28% would choose the half-day daily program, and 20% would choose the full-day daily program. 20% did not respond to the question.

Three items from the questionnaire were selected for comparison. Items and comparisons are as follows:

HD/D	FD/D	FD/AD	
			Does kindergarten busing pose problems?
33%	0%	20%	1. Yes
41%	88%	68%	2. No
26%	12%	14%	3. No answer
			What is the overall parental reaction to kindergarten program?
100%	100%	96%	1. Positive
		4%	2. Negative
			What is the teacher reaction to your kindergarten program?
100%	100%	80%	1. Positive
		20%	2. Negative

Disadvantages , advantages, and trends were cited by each of the principals surveyed. Representative comments from each type of program are given here.

Half-day Daily

Advantages:

a. More preparation time for teachers.
b. Balance of social and readiness activities.
c. Cost is less.
d. Less tiring for students.

Disadvantages:

a. Transportation
b. Mothers finding babysitters.
c. Time element is cramped.
d. Large number and imbalance in enrollment.

Full-day Daily

Advantages:

a. Strong readiness.
b. More time for special programs such as Title I and speech.
c. Less time pressure to complete curriculum goals.
d. Provide rural children with more exposure to others.

Disadvantages:

a. More classrooms required.
b. Afternoon is largely baby-sitting.
c. Too long of day.
d. Lack of understanding, support, or input from parents.

Full-day Alternate Day

Advantages:

a. Financial saving.
b. Greater opportunity to be with other grades.
c. Good meal at school.
d. Sufficient time for diagnosis.

Disadvantages:

a. If a child is absent it puts a "strain" on memory skills. (continuity)
b. Schedule confusion, especially at beginning of the year.
c. Immature students have trouble adapting to full day.
d. Lack of researched curriculum to handle this type of program.

Conclusions:

1. Half-day daily programs and full-day daily programs are viewed more positively than are full-day alternate day programs by principals, parents, and teachers.

2. In regard to cost the full-day daily program is the most expensive, full-day alternate day program is least expensive.

3. Busing poses the most problems for half-day daily programs and the least for full-day daily programs.

4. In terms of meeting curriculum needs the full-day daily program does the best.

Amherst Elementary School
Amherst, Wisconsin

Title IV-C Project # 80-07-0126-C

Curriculum Materials Evaluation Form

Name of item _____

Type _____

Purpose of material _____

_____

_____

Value to education _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name and address of company _____

_____

_____

_____

Cost _____

School Visitations

September 26, 1980

[redacted], Wisconsin - a small, central Wisconsin school district with an open concept elementary school.

Type of Program: Full-day daily.

Number of students: 51

Staff Members: 2 full time teachers, 1 full time intern, ½ time Title I aide, 1 full time student teacher.

School Day: 9:00 A.M. - 3:35 P.M.
Instructional time: 3 hours 45 minutes
Unstructured time: 2 hours 50 minutes

Background Information: This program was started 10 years ago when the district opened a new open concept elementary school. Kindergarten children were to be included in the open concept design. Initially parents had the option of picking their children up at noon, a few did for a short time. At this time all parents are receptive to the program. Although the program continues on a full time basis the kindergarten functions as a unit separate from the rest of the school.

Observations:

1.) A well-coordinated program with an excellent staff and a fine curriculum.

2.) An excellent outdoor classroom was utilized by the kindergarten as well as other grades.

3.) Bulk of instructional time was in the morning.

4.) Afternoon schedule included much time for rest, play, and special subject teachers.

5.) Children seemed tired before their 45 minute nap time, but after the nap children were alert until the end of the day.

6.) Lunch posed no problems. Kindergarten staff supervised children during this period.

7.) Special subject teachers provided instruction in music, art, and physical education.

8.) Majority of students were bused.

October 15 - 16, 1980

[redacted] Ohio - a large metropolitan school district (50,000 students)

Type of Program: Full-day daily

Number of students: Class sizes were generally above 30 in the morning.
12 students remained in afternoon extended day program.

Staff Members: 1 full time teacher and 1 full time aide

School Day: A.M. Students - 9:00 - 11:30
All-day Students 9:00 - 3:30

Instruction Time:
A.M. Students: 1 hour 55 minutes
All-day Students: 3 hours 50 minutes

Unstructured time:
A.M. Students: 35 minutes
All-day Students: 2 hours 30 minutes

Background Information: This program began in September, 1968, with seven classes located in five schools. There are now 26 classes in 25 schools with more than 500 children enrolled.

1.) A large group of children attend the morning session.
2.) A group of 12 pupils are selected from a regular half-day kindergarten class to remain for an extended or full school day. This is a Title I project.

The Boehm Test of Basic Concepts is administered to all children entering kindergarten, in participating Title I schools, during the spring and fall of the year. Pupils scoring at or below the 33 percentile are eligible for the program.

Observations:

1.) Important part of all day kindergarten program is parent involvement.

2.) In-service meetings are carried out each month. Teachers and aides participate in the in-service together.

3.) Main objective of the program is to raise the scores of the lower third of the class to a level consistent with the other two thirds. The program is successful in meeting this objective.

4.) The afternoon is an expansion of the morning program with additional instruction in basic concepts.

5.) All kindergarten students had the option of participating in a breakfast program. Kindergarten staff was not involved with the breakfast program. Only afternoon students participated in lunch program. Kindergarten staff supervised these twelve students.

6.) The three observed schools were inner-city neighborhood schools with no busing required.

7.) No special subject teachers were utilized.

8.) At end of day children appeared to be able to stay on task during a lesson.

October 23-24, 1980

Minnesota - Three small rural schools located in southeastern Minnesota near LaCrosse, Wisconsin. [redacted]

Type of Program: Full-Day Alternate Day

Number of students: Less than 20 each.

Staff Members: Full time teachers in two programs and a half time teacher in the third program.

School Day: 8:30 - 3:00
Instructional time: 4 hours
Unstructured time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Background Information: All three schools have been involved in the program for more than five years. Programs were initiated because of busing problems due to the nature of the school districts - long bus routes over extremely hilly terrain. Parental response has been excellent.

Observations:

1.) Facilities were obsolete and poorly maintained.

2.) Staff lacked adequate in-service training.

3.) Project staff shared disappointment about the programs.

4.) Bulk of learning instruction took place during the morning.

5.) Majority of students were bused.

6.) Afternoon programs were largely nonacademic.

Amherst Kindergarten Program

Type of Program: Three half-day daily classes.

Number of students: 20 students per session.

Staff members: 1 full time teacher, 1 half time teacher, and 1 teacher aide for 45 minutes a day.
Student aides: 1 period a day for each session.

School Day: 8:30 - 11:45 A.M. Students
11:45 - 3:00 P.M. Students

Instructional time: 2 hours 40 minutes
Unstructured time: 35 minutes

Background Information: Traditional half-day program that has been in existence for approximately twenty years. The program was changed for the 1980-81 school year. Length of session was increased 45 minutes. Afternoon students are now picked up before the morning children go home. Therefore, former busing problems have been eliminated. The time increase has also allowed for adequate curriculum expansion.

Weekly Time for Three Kindergarten Program Types *

PROGRAM TYPE	** TOTAL	** INSTRUCTIONAL	** UNSTRUCTURED	% INSTRUCTIONAL
Half-day Daily (local)	895	720	175	80.5%
Alternate Day (Minnesota)	975	600	375	61.5%
Full-day Daily (Wisconsin)	1975	1125	850	57%
(Ohio)	1900	1150	750	60.5%

* Based on on-site visitations and local programs.

** Time expressed in minutes per week.

Projected Costs for Three Program Types in School District of the Tomorrow River
Amherst, Wisconsin

1981-82

	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	Number of Rooms	Salary & Fringes *	Mid-day Transportation** Costs	Estimated Instructional Materials	Estimated Library Materials	Teacher Aide	TOTAL COST
Half-day Daily	49	1	1	17126.44	10611.00	1000.00	600.00	489.52	29326.96
Full-day Daily	49	2	2	31949.37	———	1500.00	600.00	979.04	35028.41
Full-day, Alternate Day	49	1	1	17126.44	———	1000.00	600.00	489.52	19215.96

1982-83

	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	Number of Rooms	Salary & Fringes *	Mid-day Transportation** Costs	Estimated Instructional Materials	Estimated Library Materials	Teacher Aide	TOTAL COST
Half-day Daily	57	1½	2	25142.31	10611.00	1150.00	700.00	489.52	38092.83
Full-day Daily	57	3	3	46342.01	———	1700.00	700.00	1468.56	50210.57
Full-day, Alternate Days	57	1½	2	25142.31	———	1150.00	700.00	734.28	27726.59

(27)

* Assumes use of current salary schedule and current staff.

** Assumes that transportation costs will remain constant at 55¢/mile plus $10.00/day for drivers.

Project Conclusions and Recommendations

Current interest in kindergarten programming is of high concern throughout the state and nation. This is due to a political response to the increase in the number of working parents, an educational response to research indicating more is accomplished in early childhood education, and a response to economic considerations, namely the high cost of busing.

Future trends in kindergarten education appears to be non-traditional—more academic and less socialization.

Based on the on-site visits and survey data the project staff has reached the following conclusions:

1.) The full day daily program is advantageous in a number of ways. It offers more instructional time for students, time to implement special subjects (art, music, physical education) into the curriculum and children are better prepared for first grade. It eliminates the problem of mid-day busing and children can be involved in all-school functions such as special assemblies, lunch programs, etc. Nearly 100% of parents, teachers, and principals involved with this program, according to surveys, favored it.

2.) The full day daily program increases costs due to increased space and staffing requirements. A few problems should also be anticipated with a lack of maturity in some children at the beginning of the school year.

3.) If parents had the opportunity to become familiar with the full day daily program they would be pleased with it because of fewer transportation and child care problems, and its educational advantages.

4.) Curriculum has not been researched adequately for full day daily and full-day alternate day programs.

5.) The only significant advantage to a full-day alternate day program is a cost savings in transportation and this is at the expense of the educational and emotional needs of the kindergarten child. This program lacks in continuity, instructional time, and management efficiency. The majority of teachers currently working with this program would not choose it again if given the option.

6.) Half-day daily programs have the advantage of daily continuity for development of curriculum, parental support because of tradition, appropriate length of day for maturity level of the young child at the beginning of the school year, and researched curriculum. The programs also use a larger percentage of the time in instructional activities compared to other program types.

7.) Half-day daily programs often lack in sufficient time for meeting curriculum goals. Mid-day busing is cumbersome and costly. Children are often unable to participate in some all-school functions and work with special subject teachers.

At the conclusion of this study it is the recommendation of the project staff that the Amherst Elementary School continue with its current program as expanded during the 1980-81 school year. The increase of 45 minutes per session has enabled the program to meet the majority of its curriculum goals and the pick-up of afternoon children prior to take home of morning children has eliminated previous busing concerns.

If future legislation or economic considerations require a change from current programming it is recommended that a full day daily program be incorporated.

It is further recommended that representatives of the state legislature be contacted to suggest that they develop legislation to provide school districts with full-day daily kindergarten programs full school aids for kindergarten children instead of counting them as .5.

The surveys and on-site visits really pointed out the advantages and positive areas of the School District of the Tomorrow River. The study also provided numerous advantages to the project staff including opportunities to increase its knowledge of curriculm, materials and instructional techniques. Lists of resources have been compiled for later use and some educational materials have been selected for use in the present program.

Recommended school board motion:

The School Board of the School District of the Tomorrow River will continue with the half-day daily program, as expanded during the 1980-81 school year, for the 1981-82 school year.